## REMARKS

In the pending Office Action, Claims 1-36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. In addition, Claims 1-36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Smith, U.S. Patent No. 629,617 (hereinafter "Smith"). In addition, Claims 27-36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Armbruster, U.S. Patent No. 856,384 (hereinafter "Armbruster").

Correction of Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1, 27, and 34 were said to lack an antecedent basis for "the drum." Appropriate corrections have been made.

The Examiner has pointed out that in Claims 27 and 34, it is unclear whether "the drum assembly" or the "shell structure" are required elements of the claim. Appropriate amendments have been made to these claims.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

As noted above, all the pending claims of the present application were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Smith. Smith discloses a rotary retort composed of a perforated cylinder "f" supported for rotation within an exterior casing "b." Angle-irons "h" extend longitudinally about the interior of the cylinder "f" to hold cans, vessels, or packages to be processed. Access to the cylinder "f" is gained through a door "d" formed in a casing "b." The cylinder "f" is supported for rotation by a continuous, one-piece hollow shaft "a" which rotates on trunnions "B B." Process fluid is introduced into the interior of the cylinder "f" through the hollow shaft "a" which has holes formed therein to route the process fluid from the interior of the hollow shaft and into the cylinder "f."

Independent Claims 1 and 27 have been amended to specify that the rotary coupling is disposed within the/a shell structure and exterior to the/a drum assembly. Smith does not

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disclose or suggest a rotary coupling disposed within casing or shell "b." Rather, in Smith, a singular hollow shaft "a" extends from the exterior of the entire apparatus through the trunnion "B B" into the exterior casing "b" and into the perforated cylinder "f." Thus, the present invention, as set forth in amended Claims 1 and 27, as well as the subclaims depending from these independent claims, is not disclosed or suggested by Smith.

Claim 34 has been amended to specify that the rotary coupling comprises portions defining a fluid receiving annulus in fluid flow communication with the source of processing fluid and in fluid flow communication with the process fluid distribution lines. This structure is not disclosed or suggested by Smith. Rather, Smith only discloses a standard "stuffing-box 'w'." Accordingly, Claim 34, as amended, is not disclosed or suggested by Smith.

Claims 27-36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as fully disclosed by Armbruster. Armbruster discloses a chlorination barrel 1 for processing pulp wood with chlorine gas. The barrel 1 includes a hollow trunnion for supporting the barrel and for receiving chlorine delivery pipe "p." A sleeve 9 serves as a coupling between the rotating trunnion and a stationary supply or feed-pipe 10. Thus, in Armbruster any leakage of the chlorine gas occurs at sleeve 9, which is external of the barrel 1. It would be appreciated that such leakage is not only wasteful, but dangerous.

As noted above, Claim 27 has been amended to specify that the rotary coupling is disposed within a shell structure and exterior to a drum assembly. Thus, in the present invention, any leakage that might occur at the rotary coupling occurs within the shell structure and not in the external environment. Accordingly, applicant respectfully submits that Claim 27, and the subclaims depending thereon, are neither disclosed nor suggested by Armbruster.

As also noted above, Claim 34 has been amended to specify that the rotary coupling comprises portions defining a fluid receiving annulus in fluid flow communication with the

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source of processing fluid and in fluid flow communication with the distribution lines. The Office Action, at Section 4, indicates that Armbruster discloses a rotary coupling comprising portions defining the fluid receiving annulus. Applicant respectfully disagrees. In Armbruster, there is no fluid receiving annulus in sleeve 9; rather, sleeve 9 simply defines a cylindrical cavity between the ends of delivery pipe "p" and feed-pipe 10. Accordingly, applicant respectfully submits that the present invention, as now set forth in Claim 34, is neither disclosed nor suggested by Armbruster.

Based on the foregoing, applicant respectfully submits that the pending claims are now in condition for allowance, and early reconsideration to this end is requested. If the Examiner has any questions concerning the foregoing, he is requested to contact the undersigned at 206-695-1705.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: June 21, 2006 Hilda J. deGraaff

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